

# Welcome to Today's Supportive School Discipline Webinar Series Event!

## Addressing Truancy: Innovative Approaches to Systemically Increasing Attendance and Reducing Chronic Truancy

*This event will start at 4:00 p.m. ET.*

## Q&A

If you have a question for the presenters, please type it in the Q&A Pod or email [ncssle@air.org](mailto:ncssle@air.org) during the Webinar.

## Feedback Form

At the end of the presentation, an event feedback form will appear. Please provide feedback on this event so that we can better provide the resources that you need. All answers are completely anonymous and are not visible to other participants.

For assistance during the Webinar, please contact the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments at [ncssle@air.org](mailto:ncssle@air.org).

# Federal Partners Welcome



Linda Rosen

Member, Supportive School Discipline Working Group  
State Representative, U.S. Department of Justice, Office  
of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

# SSD Webinar Series

- Increase awareness and understanding of school disciplinary practices that push youth out of school and many times into the justice system.
- Provide practical examples of alternative approaches that maintain school safety while ensuring academic engagement and success for all students.

# Available Technical Assistance



OJJDP State Training and  
Technical Assistance Center

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's State Training  
and Technical Assistance Center (STTAC)

U.S Department of Justice

[www.juvenilejustice-tta.org](http://www.juvenilejustice-tta.org)



Supportive School Discipline Communities of Practice (SSDCOP)

U.S. Department of Education

<http://ssdcop.neglected-delinquent.org>



National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE)

U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services

<http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov>

# Polling Question

- Which of the following best describes your role?
  - School/district administrator
  - School/student support staff
  - Teacher
  - School resource officer
  - Probation/parole officer
  - Law enforcement
  - Judge or court administrator
  - Family member
  - Youth
  - Community stakeholders

# Presentations

**1****Why Chronic Absence Matters and Key Ingredients for Improving Student Attendance**

Cecelia Leong

**2****Court-School Partnerships to Reduce Truancy: The King County and Washington Experience**

Justice Bobbe Bridge (Ret.) and Leila Curtis, J.D./M.I.T.

**3****Community Truancy Board Study and Replication Report**

Bonnie Bush, Larry Bush and Martin Kolodrub

**4****National Truancy Model and Connecticut Initiatives**

Kathryn Scheinberg Meyer, Esq.

# Why Chronic Absence Matters And Key Ingredients for Improving Student Attendance

**Cecelia Leong**, Associate Director of Attendance Works





# Unpacking Attendance Terms

## Avg Daily Attendance

- The % of enrolled students who attend school each day. It is used in some states for allocating funding.

## Truancy

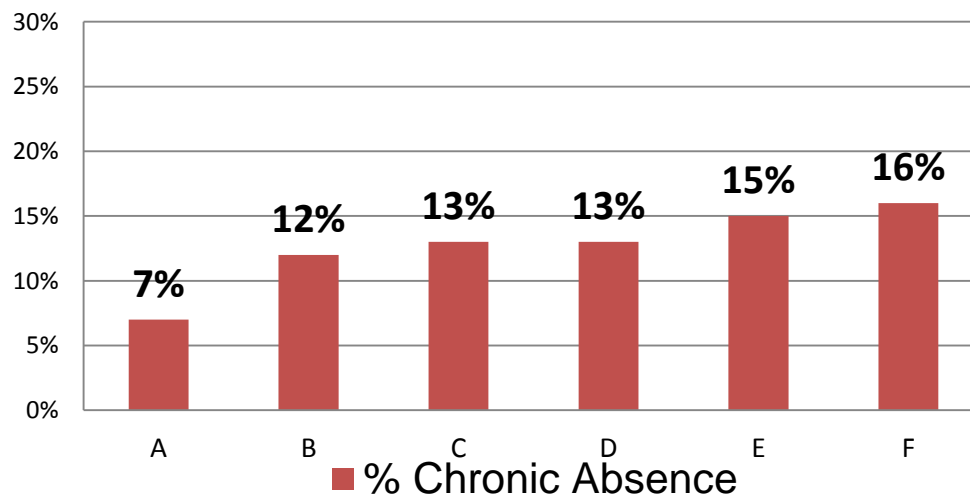
- Typically refers only to unexcused absences and is defined by each state under No Child Left Behind. It signals the potential need for legal intervention under state compulsory education laws.

## Chronic Absence

- Missing 10% or more of school for any reason – excuse, unexcused, etc. It is an indication that a student is academically at risk due to missing too much school starting in Kindergarten.

# Moving into Action Requires Knowing if Chronic Absence is a Problem

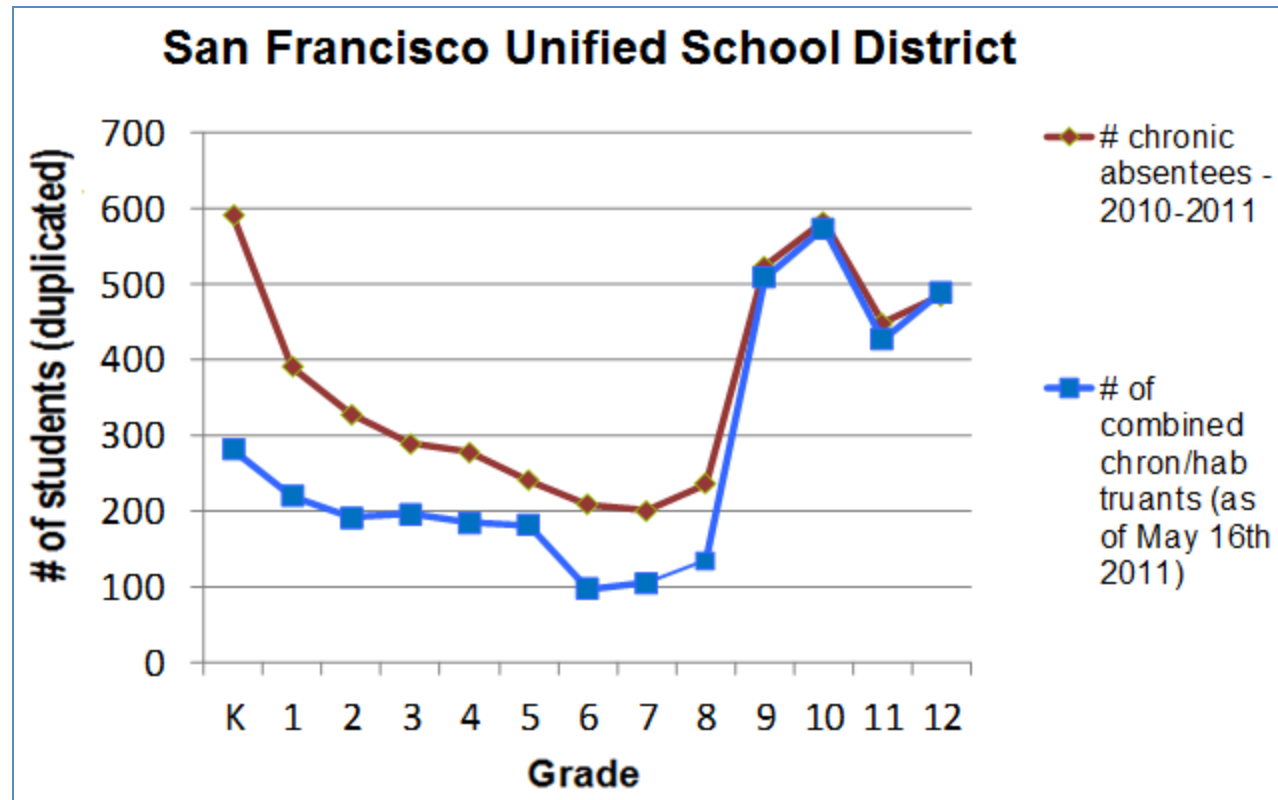
**Chronic Absence For 6 Elementary Schools in Oakland, CA with @ 95% ADA in 2012**



Most Schools Only Track Average Daily Attendance and Truancy. Both Can Mask Chronic Absence.

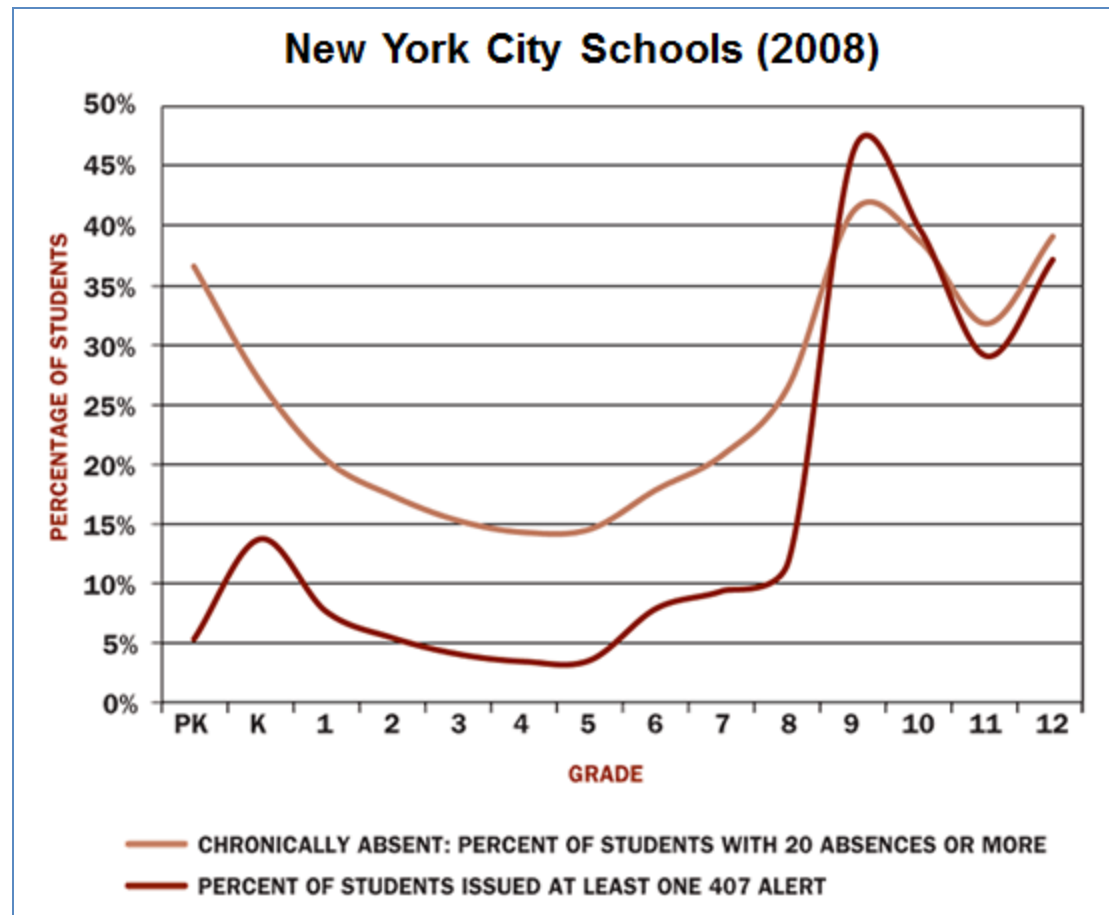
98% ADA = little chronic absence  
 95% ADA = don't know  
 93% ADA = significant chronic absence

# Chronic Absence Versus Truancy



(Note: SFUSD identified chronic truants as 10 unexcused absences)

# Sporadic—Not Just Consecutive—Absences Matter



A 407 alert is issued when a student misses 10 consecutive days or 20 days over a 40 day period. It misses more sporadic absence.

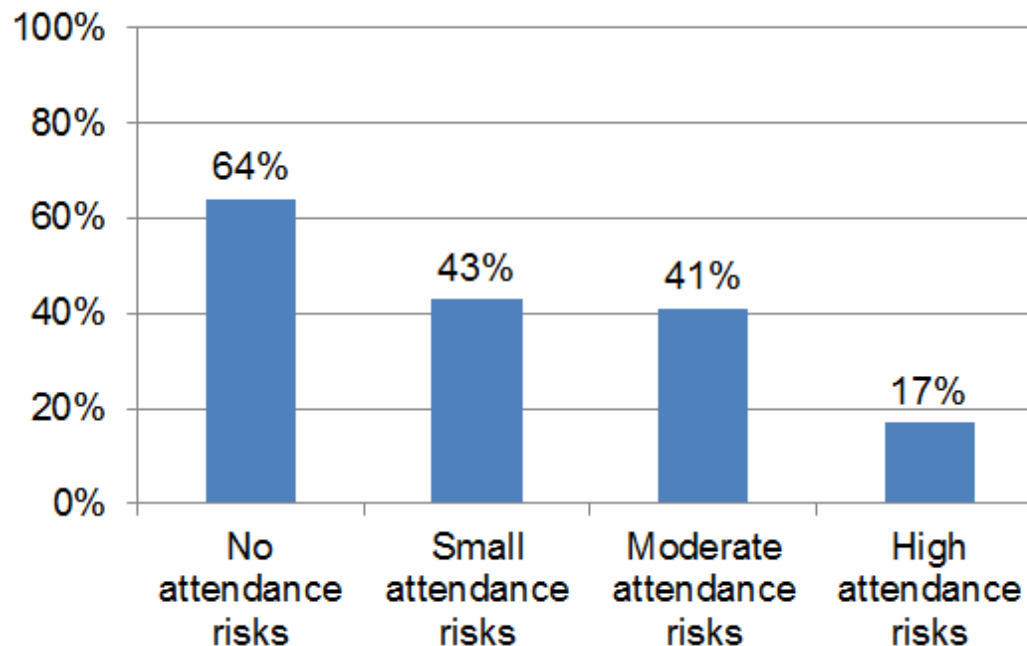
1 out of 5 elementary school children were chronically absent.

# Chronic Absence—A Hidden National Crisis

- Nationwide, as many as 10-15% of students (7.5 million) miss nearly a month of school every year. That's 135 million days of lost time in the classroom.
- In some cities, as many as one in four students are missing that much school.
- Chronic absenteeism is a red alert that students are headed for academic trouble and eventually for dropping out of high school.
- Poor attendance isn't just a problem in high school. It can start as early as kindergarten and pre-kindergarten.

# Impact of Chronic Absence

**Percent Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced on 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade ELA  
Based on Attendance in Kindergarten and in 1<sup>st</sup> Grade**



- **No Risk:** Missed less than 5% of school in K & 1<sup>st</sup>
- **Small Risk:** Missed 5-9% of days in both K & 1<sup>st</sup>
- **Moderate Risk:** Missed 5-9% of days in 1 year & 10% in 1 year
- **High Risk:** Missed 10% or more in K & 1<sup>st</sup>

# Chronic Absence in PreK + K = Significantly Worse Outcomes

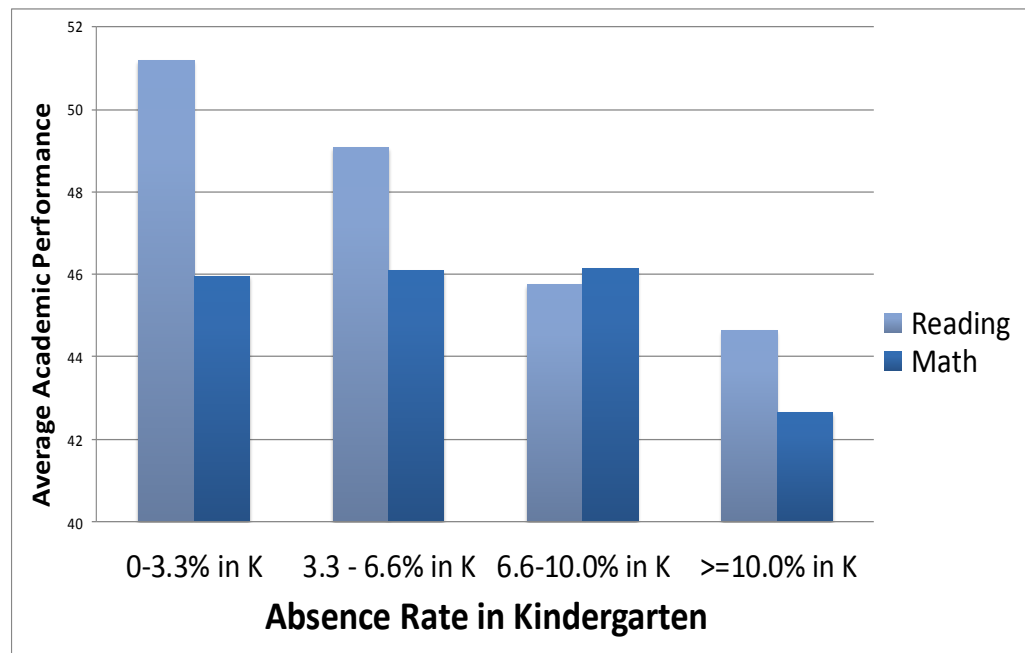
For children chronically absent in PreK & K, the Baltimore Education Research Consortium found:

- Greater likelihood of continued poor attendance. 50% were chronically absent again in Grade 1, 45% in Grade 2
- Lower outcomes in Grade 1, Grade 2 in reading and math, and math in Grade 3
- More often retained (26% compared with 9% of students with no chronic absence)
- More likely to be identified as needing special education

By contrast, children who participated in Head Start had better attendance and higher 3rd grade test scores.

# The Long-Term Impact of Chronic Kindergarten Absence is Most Troubling for Poor Children

**5<sup>th</sup> Grade Math and Reading Performance By K Attendance for Children Living In Poverty.**

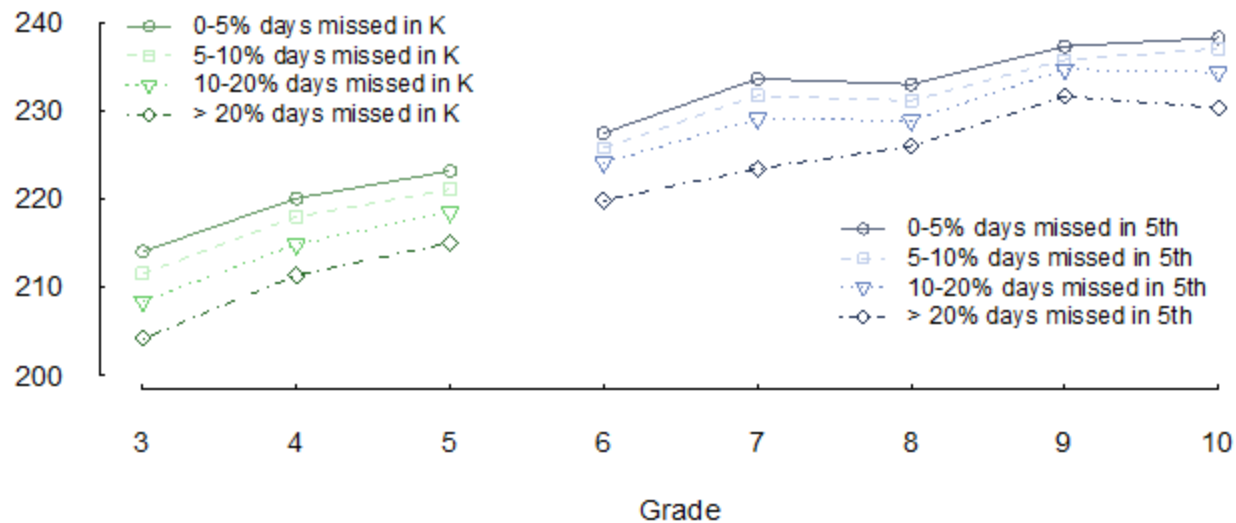


Academic performance was lower even if attendance had improved in 3rd grade.



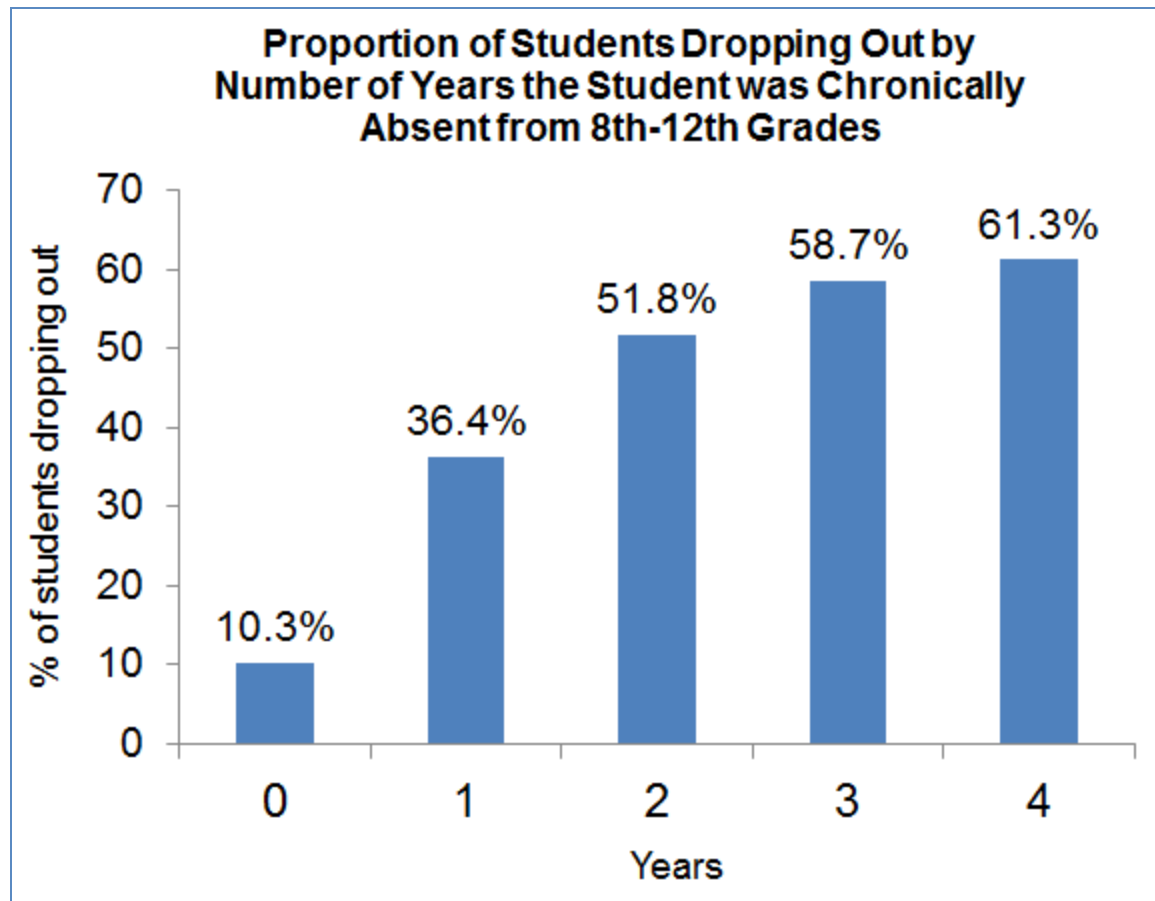
# There Is a Clear and Consistent Relationship Between Early Attendance and Later Achievement

**Average reading RIT scores for two cohorts of Oregon students, by absence rates in kindergarten and 5<sup>th</sup> grade**



(Note: 23% of students statewide in Oregon were chronically absent)

# The Effects of Chronic Absence on Dropout Rates Are Cumulative

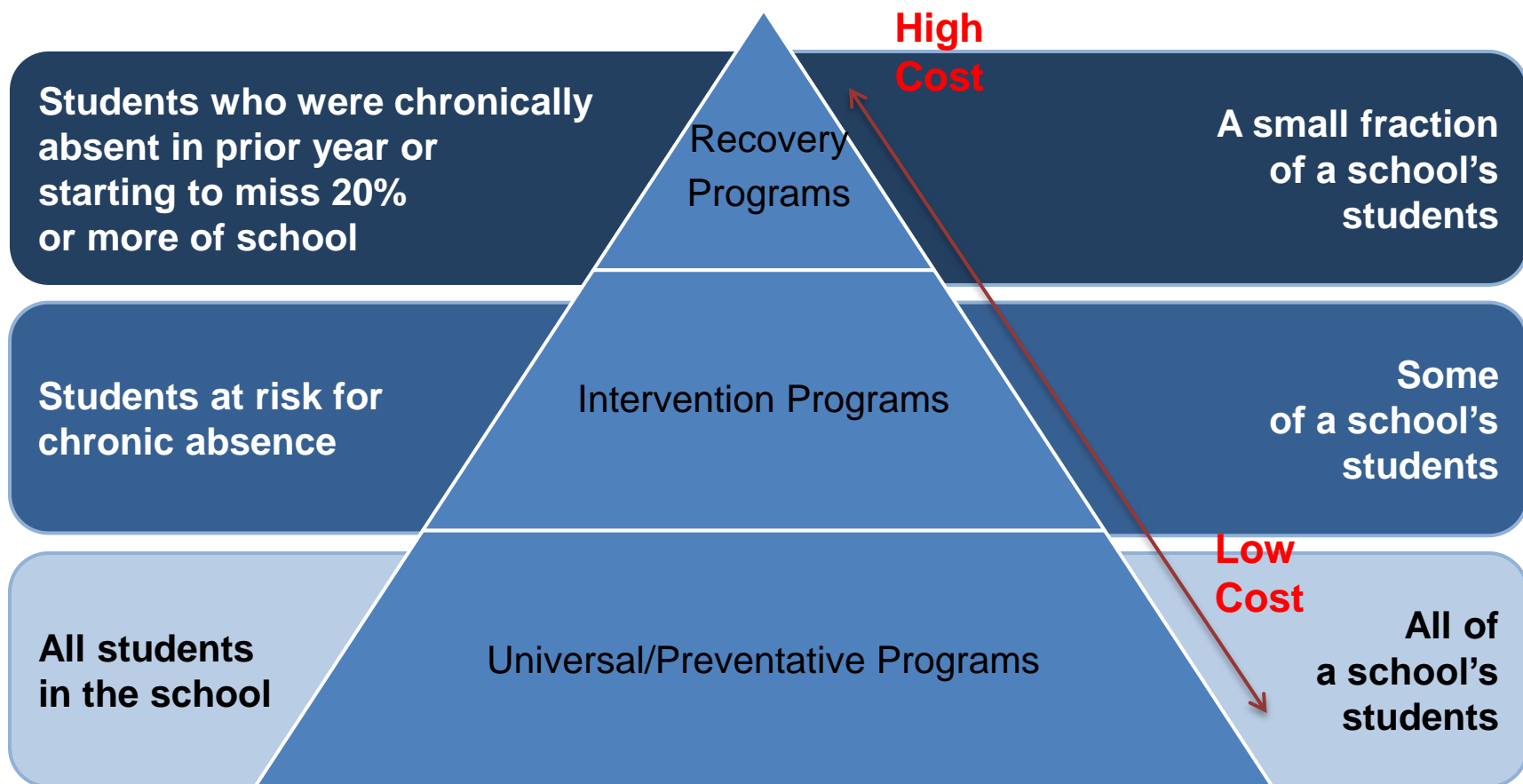


With every year of chronic absenteeism, a higher percentage of students dropped out of school.

# What Are the Implications for Agencies Charged with Truancy Prevention and Reduction?

- Attendance interventions need to start much earlier in a student's life.
- Chronic absence in addition to truancy is a key indicator to track.
- Partnership with school districts that have created systematic ways of reducing chronic absence is essential to reducing truancy as well as chronic absence.

# Increased Attendance Involves a 3-Tiered Approach that Fits with Most Reform Efforts



# Solutions Only Work if Grounded in Understanding of What Leads to Chronic Absence

## Discretion

Parents or students don't know attendance matters

School lacks a strong culture of attendance

## Aversion

Child is struggling academically

Lack of engaging instruction

Child is being bullied

## Barriers

Lack of access to health care

No safe path to school

Poor transportation

*Special thanks to Dr. Robert Balfanz, Everyone Graduates Center, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD for providing this framework.*

# Universal Strategies for School Communities

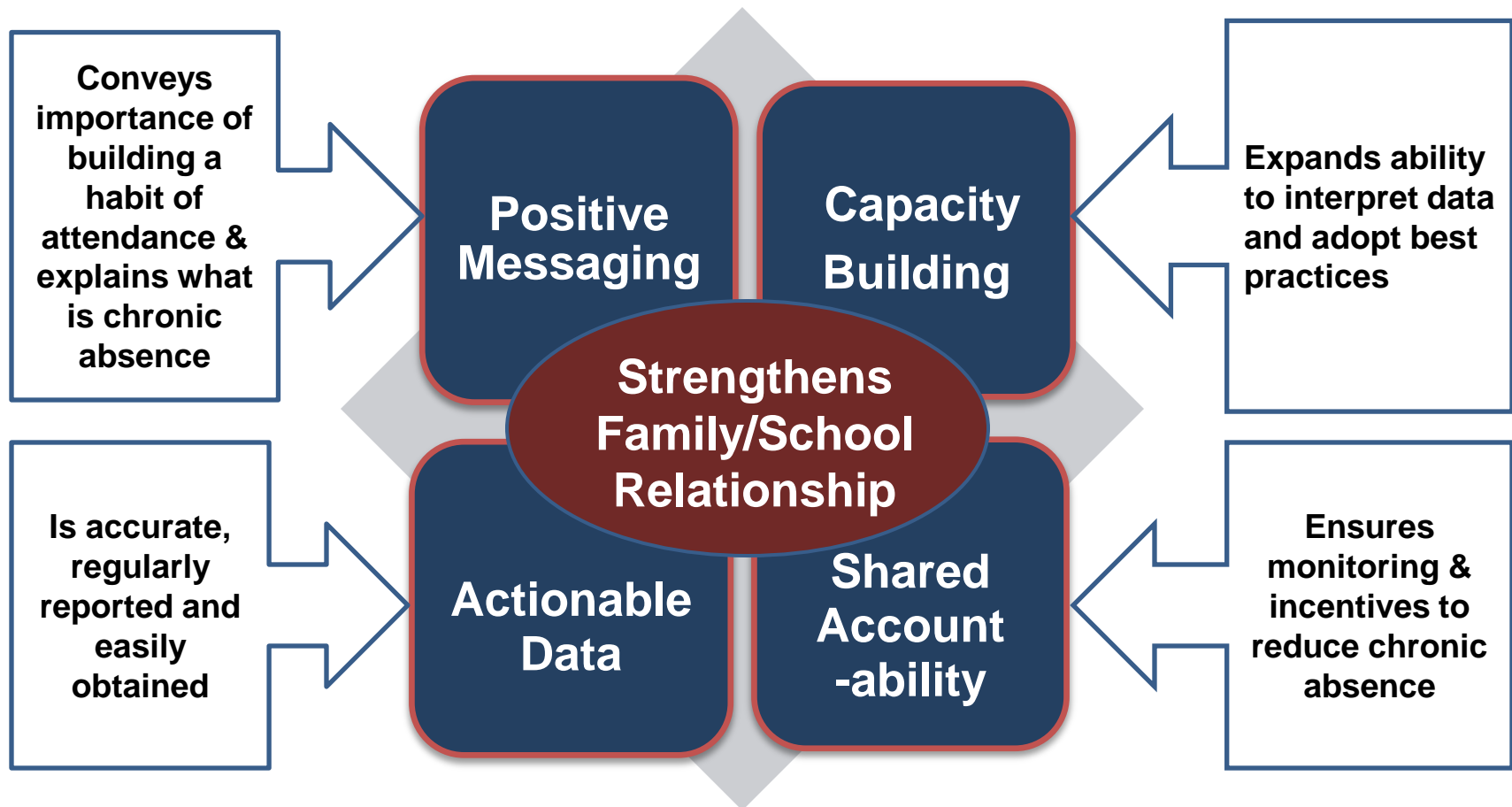


# Variation Across Schools Helps Identify Good Practice and Need for Intervention

## Chronic Absence Levels Among Oakland Public Schools (2009-10)

|  | Elementary | Middle | High School |
|--|------------|--------|-------------|
| # Schools with 0%-5% Chronic Absence     | 9          | 0      | 0           |
| # Schools with 5.1%-10% Chronic Absence  | 17         | 4      | 1           |
| # Schools with 10.1%-20% Chronic Absence | 25         | 8      | 6           |
| # Schools with >20.1% Chronic Absence    | 9          | 4      | 9           |
| Total No. Schools                        | 60         | 16     | 16          |
|  |            |        |             |
| Highest % of Chronic Absence             | 31.5%      | 32.8%  | 42.1%       |
| Lowest % of Chronic Absence              | 0.3%       | 6.9%   | 7.9%        |
| Median                                   | 12.7%      | 14.9%  | 21.0%       |
| Mean                                     | 11.9%      | 15.6%  | 22.4%       |

# Ingredients for Success & Sustainability in a District





# Examples of Successful Efforts



[Baltimore](#): Fewer unnecessary suspensions, reduced middle school transitions, expanded monitoring of attendance data, and a citywide campaign have **helped cut middle school chronic absence in half**. Baltimore is now turning its attention to preschool and elementary school.



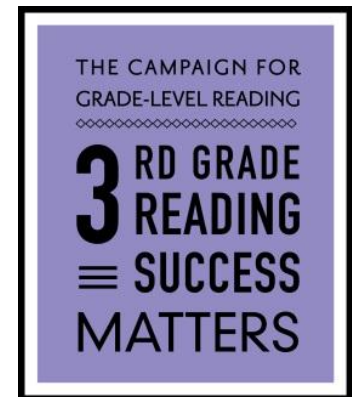
[New York City](#): School wide incentives, celebrity wakeup calls, data dashboards, and success mentors for at-risk students **have reduced chronic absence in pilot elementary, middle and high schools**. Students with success mentors gained 11,800 additional days of school.

For additional examples: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/what-works/>

# The Campaign for Grade Level Reading

The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading is focusing on three challenges to reading success that are amenable to community solutions:

- The Readiness Gap: Too many children from low-income families begin school already far behind.
- The Attendance Gap (Chronic Absence): Too many children from low-income families miss too many days of school.
- The Summer Slide (Summer Learning Loss): Too many children lose ground over the summer months.



# The Superintendents Call to Action



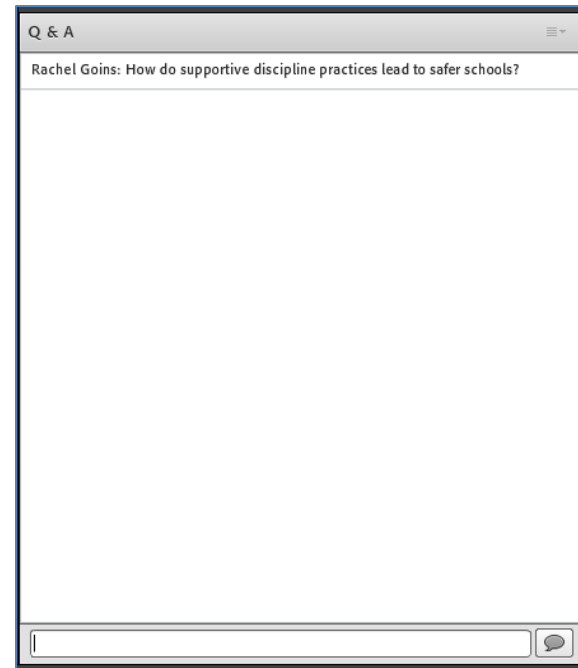
**Own the  
Issue**

**Mobilize the  
Community**

**Drive With  
Data**

To sign-up for the Call to Action, or to learn more, please visit:  
[www.attendanceworks.org/superintendents-call-to-action](http://www.attendanceworks.org/superintendents-call-to-action)

# Questions?



If you have a question for the presenters, please type it in the Q&A Pod or email [ncssle@air.org](mailto:ncssle@air.org) during the Webinar.

# Court-School Partnerships to Reduce Truancy: The King County and Washington Experience

**Justice Bobbe Bridge (ret.)**, President/ CEO,  
Center for Children & Youth Justice Chair,  
Washington State Becca Task Force

**Leila Curtis, J.D./ M.I.T.**, MfC Truancy Project  
Coordinator, King County Prosecutor's Office  
Staff, Washington State Becca Task Force

“It is the paramount duty of the State to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders.”

*--Article IX, Section 1, Washington State Constitution*

# Key Dates in Washington's History

- **1871:** Washington State's Compulsory Attendance laws are enacted.
- **1995:** Washington State's Compulsory Attendance laws (RCW 28A.225) require the school/district and the juvenile court to take specific actions when youth are truant.
- **2002:** Washington State Becca Task Force is formed.
- **2006:** The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Models for Change Initiative is launched in Washington State.

# Washington State Becca Task Force

## 2011-12 Membership

Legislators (State Senate/  
House of Representatives)  
Legislative Committee Staff  
Judges and Commissioners  
Juvenile Court  
Administrators  
Juvenile Court Staff  
State Office of the  
Superintendent of Public  
Instruction  
School Administrators  
School Staff (Truancy  
officers, teachers,  
counselors, SROs)

Administrative Office of the  
Courts  
Educational Service  
Districts  
Law Enforcement  
Prosecutors  
Defense Attorneys  
Civil Legal Attorneys  
Education Ombudsman  
Community Service  
Providers  
Researchers  
National Experts/ NRB  
Lobbyists  
Parents



*The mission of the Becca Task Force is to keep kids in school and out of the juvenile justice system.*



# Washington State Becca Task Force (Cont'd)

- Founded in 2002
- Chaired by Justice Bobbe Bridge (ret.)
- Approximately 80 members from multi-disciplinary fields
- Voluntary, statewide organization
- Activities:
  - Regular meetings
  - Annual Statewide Becca Conferences
  - Legislative “Education Sessions”
  - Policy development

# Collaboration is Essential to Combat Truancy

**“Truancy programs that include a broad-based collaborative as part of their approach are stronger and last longer.”**

*-- National Center for School Engagement*



**“Chronic truancy is a community problem that can best be addressed by collaboration among various systems in the community.”**

*-- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention*

# Washington Models for Change Approach to Truancy Reduction

- **Strong partnerships and collaborations** between schools/districts and juvenile courts

## Examples

| Benton-Franklin Counties   | Clark County   | Spokane County   | King County  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Principal's Summits</li><li>• Community Truancy Boards</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clark County Truancy Project</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community Truancy Boards</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Youth R.E.A.C.H.</li></ul> |

# Youth R.E.A.C.H.

- Three-tiered, graduated diversion & intervention program
- Partners:
  - King County Prosecuting Attorney Office
  - King County Juvenile Court
  - 2 school districts
  - Service providers (legal, community)
  - WA-MfC NRB
- Oversight
  - Center for Children & Youth Justice
  - WA State Becca Task Force
- 2-year pilot

# Youth R.E.A.C.H.

## School Districts

- Monitor & facilitate attendance
- Truancy intervention
- Case diversion to Youth R.E.A.C.H.
- Legal action

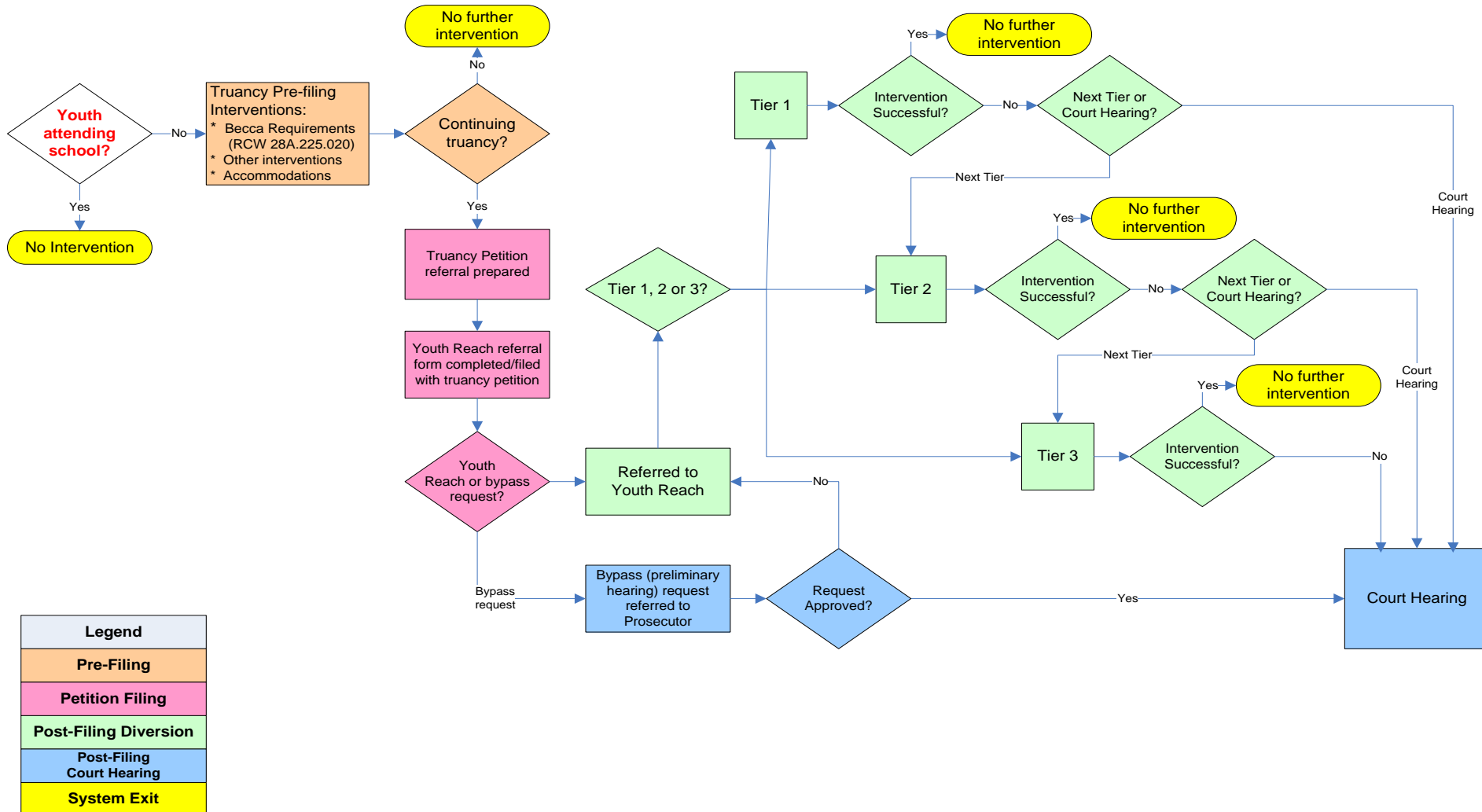
## Juvenile Court

- Stay truancy actions
- Ensure accountability
- Jurisdiction

## KCPAO

- Coordinate & schedule referrals
- Technical assistance
- Gatekeeper for legal action

**Youth R.E.A.C.H.**  
 (Re-Engaging in Education through Action and Coordinated Help)  
*King County Truancy Post-Filing Diversion Pilot Program*



# Youth R.E.A.C.H. (cont.)

- Pilot Recap (Evaluation by Vera Institute of Justice):
  - Approximately 600 referrals total
  - Majority referred to Tier One
  - Primary issues identified:
    - Lack of school engagement
    - Family stressors
  - Differential results in return to school rates between year one and year two
- Lessons Learned:
  - Quality assurance & accountability
  - Program staffing & leadership
  - Data collection & quality
  - Youth-provider interaction
  - Cultural competency

# Contact Us!

Justice Bobbe Bridge (ret.)

[BJBridge@ccyj.org](mailto:BJBridge@ccyj.org)

Hannah Gold

[HGold@ccyj.org](mailto:HGold@ccyj.org)

Center for Children & Youth Justice

[www.ccyj.org](http://www.ccyj.org)

Washington State Becca Task Force

[www.ccyj.org/initiatives/becca-task-force](http://www.ccyj.org/initiatives/becca-task-force)



# Questions?



If you have a question for the presenters, please type it in the Q&A Pod or email [ncssle@air.org](mailto:ncssle@air.org) during the Webinar.

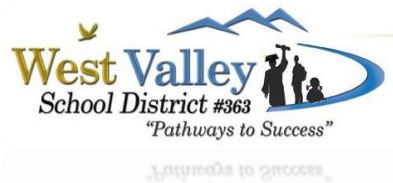
Spokane County Juvenile Court and West Valley  
School District

# Community Truancy Board Study and Replication Project

**Bonnie Bush**, Juvenile Court Administrator

**Larry Bush**, Principal West Valley School

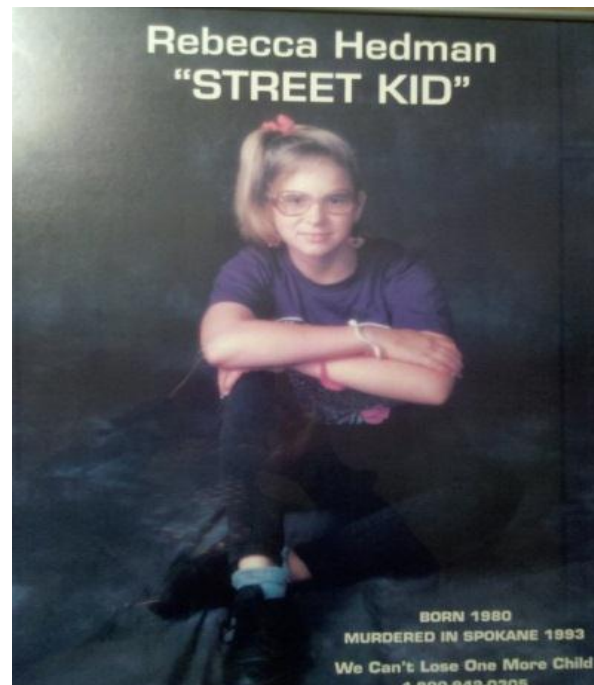
**Martin Kolodrub**, Juvenile Court Truancy Specialist



# The Washington State Becca Bill

## Rebecca Hedman

Born 1980 | Murdered in Spokane in 1993



# Spokane County *Models for Change* Reform Effort

- It was the communities priority to address the needs of drop-out, truant, and at-risk youth.
- Three major goals were to:
  1. Study and report the effectiveness of the West Valley School District Community Truancy Board (WVSD-CTB).
  2. Ensure Spokane County Juvenile Court implements a best practice model designed for truant youth (Check & Connect Model).
  3. Increase alternatives to formal court processing through replication efforts and the design of the CTB Toolkit.

# Community Truancy Board Developmental Phases and Outcomes

- **PHASE 1:** School Based (1996-2004)
  - 68% of truant youth became court involved
- **PHASE 2:** Community Based (2004-2008)
  - 20% of truant youth became court involved
- **PHASE 3:** Multi-systems Collaboration (2008-2011)
  - **6% of truant youth became court involved**

# Community Truancy Board Membership

- A School District Administrator who will preside over the board hearing
- School District Truancy Coordinator
- Staff from the school, the parent and the student
- Service providers and community members examples are:

Juvenile Court (Truancy PC, WARNS  
and Check & Connect Model)

Work Source

Next Generation Zone

Job Corp

Local Food Banks

Faith Base Community

Community Centers

Community Volunteers

Community Minded Enterprises (medical  
needs)

Department of Children and Family  
Services

Mental Health

YMCA

Boys and Girls Club

# Role of Community Truancy Board

- **Community Truancy Board Members** help create an atmosphere of support to help keep truant students from falling “through the cracks” and dropping out of school.
- **What does Truancy Board look like?**
  - Room Set Up
  - Process
  - Student explanation
  - Creative Problem Solving
  - Signed Agreement
  - Follow Up



# Juvenile Court “Truancy Specialist” Probation Counselor and *Check and Connect Model*

- The Truancy Specialist was housed in West Valley School District to pilot the Check and Connect Model.
  - Monitors or “checks” a student’s attendance, grades, behavior, etc.
  - Connects a student to personalized data-based interventions
  - Mentors students for a minimum of two years
  - Facilitates student access to and participation in school



# Truancy Specialist (Probation Counselor)

- Participates as a member of the West Valley School District Community Truancy Board.
- Meets with the truant youth and his/her family to assess the youth's needs and strengths.
- Refers the truant youth to necessary services.
- Monitors truant youth's attendance and behavior at school.
- Acts as a liaison between West Valley School District and the Juvenile Court.
- Educates the community on Truancy issues.

# Project Demographics

| Characteristics                                | Project Year * |        |        | Total |
|--|----------------|--------|--------|-------|
|  | Year 1         | Year 2 | Year 3 |       |
| Number of Cases                                | 139            | 179    | 130    | 448   |
| Gender   |                |        |        |       |
| • Male   | 47%            | 52%    | 49%    | 50%   |
| • Female                                       | 53%            | 48%    | 51%    | 50%   |
| Median Age                                     | 16.0           | 16.0   | 16.0   | 16.0  |
| • 15 and younger                               | 37%            | 36%    | 36%    | 37%   |
| • 16 and older                                 | 63%            | 64%    | 64%    | 63%   |
| Grade in School                                |                |        |        |       |
| • 6 <sup>th</sup> to 8 <sup>th</sup> Grades    | 14%            | 6%     | 6%     | 9%    |
| • 9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> Grades  | 41%            | 65%    | 54%    | 54%   |
| • 11 <sup>th</sup> and 12 <sup>th</sup> Grades | 45%            | 29%    | 40%    | 37%   |
| School   |                |        |        |       |
| • West Valley HS                               | 55%            | 47%    | 45%    | 49%   |
| • Spokane Valley HS                            | 19%            | 18%    | 15%    | 17%   |
| • Contract (CBE)                               | 14%            | 29%    | 34%    | 26%   |
| • Centennial MS                                | 12%            | 6%     | 6%     | 8%    |
| IEP**  | 18%            | 16%    | 22%    | 19%   |
| Employed**                                     | 21%            | 15%    | 18%    | 18%   |
| Prior Truancy Petitions***                     | 38%            | 46%    | 47%    | 44%   |

\*Non-white and/or  
Hispanic

\*\*Determined at first  
meeting underestimates  
actual due to missing  
data

\*\*\*Since September 2006

# Spokane County Juvenile Court Risk Assessment Results

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Total Number Petitions  | 448       |
| Number completed assessments  | 330       |
| Risk Element: Peers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All antisocial or gang</li> </ul>  | 7%        |
| Risk Elements: Substance Abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Substance use (not disruptive)</li> <li>Drugs/alcohol disruptive</li> </ul> | 60%<br>4% |
| Risk Element: Mental Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental health risk factor</li> </ul>   | 32%       |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Risk Element: DSHS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One or more placements</li> </ul>            | 10% |
| Risk Element: Runaways/placements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One or more events</li> </ul> | 25% |
| Risk Elements: Abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victim of abuse</li> </ul>                 | 19% |
| Risk Element: Family/siblings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jail or imprisonment</li> </ul>   | 48% |

# Spokane County Juvenile Court/West Valley School District Outcomes

- An example of success spotlighting one school in West Valley School District:
- Out of a total of 51 students:
  - Eight (8) seniors with truancy petitions graduated, one having made up considerable credit deficiencies to do so.
  - Ten (10) of 14 juniors were on target by the end of the year with credits; the other four (4) students were within two credits of being on target.
  - There were greater deficiencies among the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders. Of these 29 students, 11 were on target by the end of the year. All earned credits after the Truancy Board, but many were still quite credit-deficient.
    - (While deficient, the Truancy Specialist reports that many of the students were enrolled in summer school and set to begin the next year on target.)

# Community Truancy Board Replication Efforts

- The Washington State University study of the WVSD-CTB, concluded:
  - Students who attended WVSD had a higher rate overall of graduating or obtaining a GED and correspondingly lower dropout and transfer rates than truant students in comparison districts.
  - Probation Counselor using Check & Connect model increased success rates
  - The WVSD-CTB is an effective and promising intervention for truancy.
  - The WVSD –CTB is an attractive program for replication and sustainable because start up and on-going costs can be kept minimal through re-allocation of existing resources.
- **Replication sites include:**
  - East Valley School District
  - Mead School District
  - Spokane Public Schools District
- **Statewide Replication efforts include:**
  - Okanogan County
  - Jefferson County

# More Information

For (1) more information from the WSU study and (2) a copy of the CTB tool kit, or to view the 9- minute video summarizing Spokane's truancy efforts:

- Visit: <http://www.spokanecounty.org/Juvenile>
- Or contact:

**Bonnie Bush**

Juvenile Court Administrator

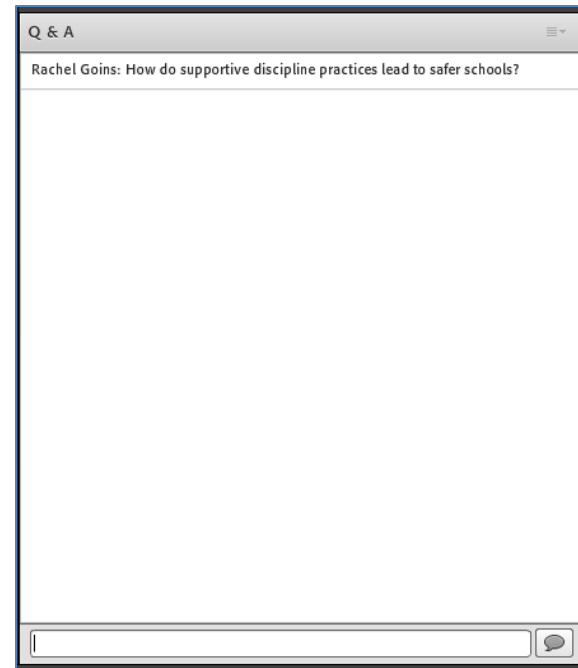
1208 W. Mallon, Spokane, WA 99201

(509) 477-2406

[bbush@spokanecounty.org](mailto:bbush@spokanecounty.org)



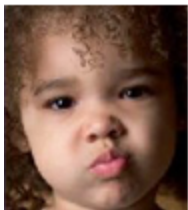
# Questions?



If you have a question for the presenters, please type it in the Q&A Pod or email [ncssle@air.org](mailto:ncssle@air.org) during the Webinar.

# National Truancy Models and Connecticut Initiatives

Kathryn Scheinberg Meyer, Esq.  
Staff Attorney



Center for **Children's** Advocacy



# CT Families With Service Needs (FWSN) Reform

1. Youth who commit status offenses are NOT incarcerated, even if they violate court orders.
2. Schools are required to initiate a series of escalating interventions to address truant behavior PRIOR to court involvement.
3. FWSN complaints, even when filed, are diverted from the Juvenile Court through a variety of channels.

# Public Act 05-250

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter:

(1) **No child whose family has been adjudicated as a family with service needs in accordance with section 46b-149 may be processed or held in a juvenile detention center as a delinquent child**, or be convicted as delinquent, solely for the violation of a valid order which regulates future conduct of the child that was issued by the court following such an adjudication; and (2) no such child who is found to be in violation of any such order may be punished for such violation by commitment to any juvenile detention center.

# Public Act 06-188

- Created Families With Service Needs (FWSN) Advisory Board charged with the following tasks:
  - (1) monitor the progress being made by the Department of Children and Families in developing services and programming for girls from families with service needs and other girls,
  - (2) monitor the progress being made by the Judicial Department in the implementation of the requirements of Public Act 05-250
  - (3) provide advice with respect to such implementation upon the request of the Judicial Department or the General Assembly, and
  - (4) not later than December 31, 2007, make written recommendations to the Judicial Department and the General Assembly

# FWSN Advisory Board, Truancy Subcommittee

- Included members representing: Department of Children and Families (DCF), CSSD, Chief Court Administrator, Juvenile Prosecutors and Public Defenders, Juvenile Court Judges, Legislators, Advocates, and more
- Promulgated a 2008 Report inc. Truancy Recommendations
- “An Act Concerning Truancy” included the following recommendations:
  - Mandate FWSN filings within certain timeframe
  - Require State Department of Education (SDE) to define “excused” and “unexcused” absences
  - Require SDE to report to governor and General Assembly on truancy data and school district truancy programs

# Responsibilities of the Schools

- Required to notify parents of the truancy policies, notify parents of absences, schedule parent meetings when students becomes legally “truant,” attempt community interventions prior to FWSN filing
- “An Act Concerning Truancy” added the following:
  - Mandate FWSN filings within certain timeframe
  - Require State Department of Education (SDE) to define “excused” and “unexcused” absences
  - Require SDE to report to governor and General Assembly on truancy data and school district truancy programs

# Other Structural Diversions

- Probation can refer lower-risk FWSNs to the Juvenile Review Board.
- Probation refers high-needs FWSNs to the Family Support Centers.
- Probation will send FWSN complaints back to the school district if they do not attempt prior interventions.
- Probation usually handles cases “non-judicially.”

# Truancy Publication

## Truancy Intervention: National Models and Connecticut Initiatives

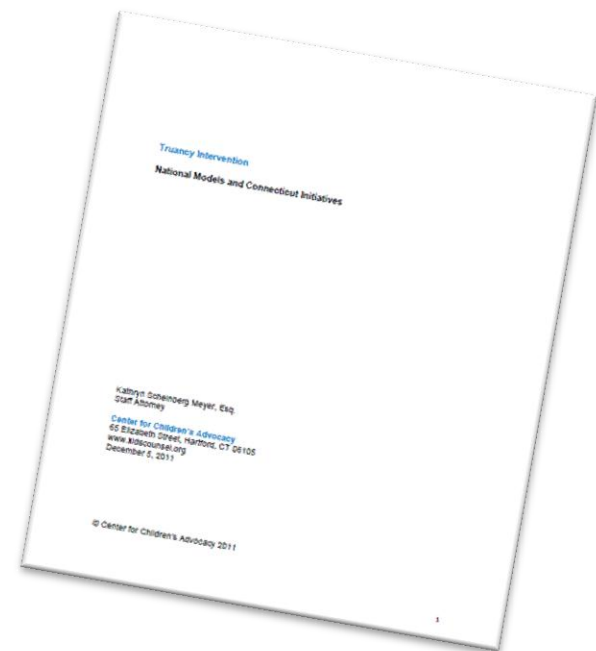
**Center for Children's Advocacy**

65 Elizabeth Street, Hartford, CT 06105

[www.kidscounsel.org](http://www.kidscounsel.org)

December 5, 2011

© Center for Children's Advocacy 2011



# Truancy Court Prevention Project



"My schedule doesn't allow me to take on just any volunteer opportunity. My deep respect for the partners in this collaborative project was what drove me to say yes to the Truancy Court Prevention Project.

I admit I have wondered if my participation really makes a difference. But when I went to the graduation and saw the parents beaming with pride about their kids' progress, I realized how important this program has been to these families."



# Truancy Court Prevention Project

- Partnership between the Center for Children's Advocacy (CCA), the Judicial Department, School District, and Mental Health Agency:
  - Bridgeport: CCA, Judicial, Bridgeport Public Schools, Child and Family Guidance Agency.
  - Work with 6th-8th grade students who have exhibited a certain # of absences.
  - Bimonthly court sessions with volunteer "mentor" judges who help students set and achieve goals (pro-social activities, educational achievement, and attendance).
  - CCA provides legal advocacy in a range of issues that affect truancy: special education, school discipline, benefits, living situations, immigration, etc.
  - CFG provides case management to child and family.

# Highlight: New Britain Consolidated School District

- Efforts led by Joe Vaverchak, Director of Attendance and Residency, New Britain, CT
- New focuses on K-2 truancy and chronic absenteeism
  - Received a grant from the state to hire Kindergarten Monitors: specialized case mgrs.
  - Partnering with Attendance Works.
  - Encouraging suburban districts to shine the light on chronic absenteeism (vs. Average Daily Attendance #s).

# Take Aways

- Truancy can be prevented— Act now!
- Truancy can be addressed.
  - Collaborate cross-agency.
  - Partner with community stakeholders.
  - Use data to understand the issue and track progress.

# Next SSD Webinars

- **Stemming the School-to-Prison Pipeline: Applying Restorative Justice Principles to School Discipline Practices**

March 20, 2013, 4 p.m.–5:30 p.m., ET

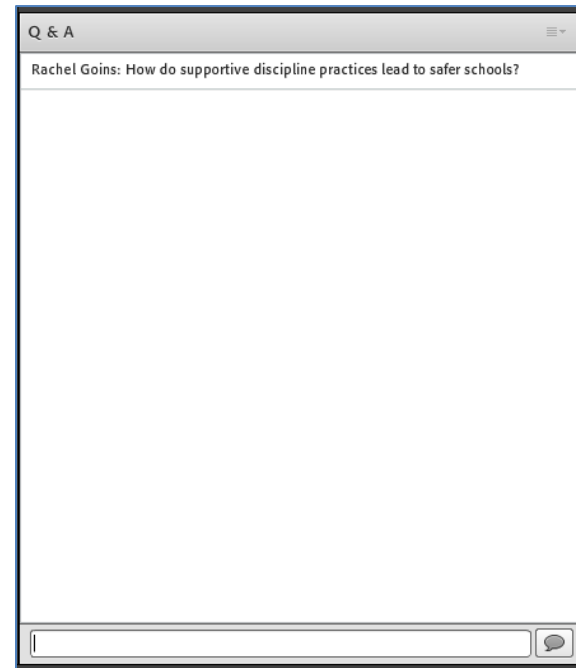
**Dr. Mara Schiff**, Associate Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Florida Atlantic University

**Ms. Rita Alfred**, Co-founder of the Restorative Justice Training Institute

**Ms. Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz**, Restorative Justice Coordinator for the Mennonite Central Committee

- SRO Roles and Responsibilities (April)

# Questions?



If you have a question for the presenters, please type it in the Q&A Pod or email [ncssle@air.org](mailto:ncssle@air.org) during the Webinar.

# Citations

1. Attendance Works. (2013, February 27). Tools and T.A. Retrieved from: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/tools/>
2. Nauer, K. et al. (2008). Strengthening Schools by Strengthening Families, Center for New York City Affairs New School.
3. Applied Survey Research & Attendance Works. (2011). Attendance in Early Elementary Grades: Associations with Students Characteristics, School Readiness, and Third Grade Outcomes Mini-Report. Retrieved from: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/ASR-Mini-Report-Attendance-Readiness-and-Third-Grade-Outcomes-7-8-11.pdf>
4. Chang, H. & Romero M. (2008). Present Engaged, and Accounted For: The Critical Importance of Addressing Chronic Absence in Early Grades. National Center for Children in Poverty. New York, New York. Retrieved from: [http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub\\_837.html](http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_837.html)
5. ECONorthwest. (2011). Education. Retrieved from: <http://www.econw.com/what-we-do/areas-of-expertise/education-health-social-policy/education/>
6. Utah Education Policy Center. (2012). *Research Brief: Chronic Absenteeism*, University of Utah, July 2012.

# Citations (cont.)

7. Spokane County, Washington. (2013, February 27). Juvenile Court Services. Retrieved from: <http://www.spokanecounty.org/juvenilecourt/content.aspx?c=1040>.
8. Rinaldi, L. (2009). Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders (DSO) Projects Multi-Site. Rinaldi & Associates. Seattle, WA. Retrieved from: <http://www.spokanecounty.org/data/juvenile/modelsforchange/GJJAC%20DSO%20EVAL%20YR%2011-8-09.pdf>
9. An Act Concerning Children Of Families With Service Needs. State of Connecticut Public Act No. 05-250, Substitute House Bill No. 6978. Retrieved from: <http://www.cga.ct.gov/KID/FWSN/Docs/2005PA-00250-R00HB-06978-PA.pdf>
10. Families With Service Needs Advisory Board. State of Connecticut Public Act No. 06-188, Retrieved from: <http://www.cga.ct.gov/KID/FWSN/Docs/PublicAct06-188.pdf>
11. Policies and Procedures Concerning Truants. Connecticut General Statutes. Section 10-198a. Retrieved from: [http://www.lawserver.com/law/state/connecticut/ct-laws/connecticut\\_statutes\\_10-198a](http://www.lawserver.com/law/state/connecticut/ct-laws/connecticut_statutes_10-198a)
12. Scheinberg Meyer, K. (2011). Truancy Intervention: National Models and Connecticut Initiatives. Center for Children's Advocacy, Hartford, CT. Retrieved from: <http://www.kidscounsel.org/Dec2011TruancyModels.pdf>